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ACRES OF DIAMONDS

A Part of the Story as Told by
Russell H. Conwell

And its Application in the Boys' and Girls' 4-H Club Exhibit.

The Story .

"When going down the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers many years ago with a party of English travelers, I found myself under the direction of an old Arab guide. He thought that it was not only his duty to guide us down those rivers, and do what he was paid for doing, but also to entertain us with stories curious and weird, ancient and modern, strange and familiar. Many of them I have forgotten, but there is one which I shall never forget.

Said he, 'I will tell you a story now which I reserve for my particular friends.' I listened, and I have ever been glad that I did. The old guide told me that there once lived not far from the River Indus an ancient Persian by the name of Ali Hafed. He said that Ali Hafed owned a very large farm, that he had orchards, grainfields and gardens; that he had money at interest, and was a wealthy and contented man. He was contented because he was wealthy and wealthy because he was contented.

One day there visited that old Persian farmer one of those ancient Buddhist priests, one of the wise men of the East. He sat down and told this old farmer how this world of ours was made. He said that this world was once a mere bank of fog, and that the Almighty thrust His finger into this bank of fog, and began slowly to move His finger around, increasing the speed until at last He whirled this bank of fog into a solid ball of fire. Then it went rolling through the universe, burning its way through other banks of fog, and condensed the moisture without, until it fell in floods of rain upon its hot surface, and cooled the outward crust. Then the internal fires bursting outward through the crust threw up the mountains and hills, the valleys, the plains and prairies of this wonderful world of ours. If this internal molten mass came bursting out and cooled very quickly it became granite; less quickly, copper; less quickly, silver; less quickly, gold, and, after gold, diamonds, were made. Said the old priest, 'A diamond is a congealed drop of sunlight'. Now that is literally scientifically true, that a diamond is an actual deposit of carbon from the sun. The old priest told Ali Hafed that if he had one diamond the size of his thumb he could purchase the country, and if he had a mine of diamonds he could place his children upon thrones through the influence of their great wealth.

Ali Hafed heard all about diamonds, how much they were worth, and went to his bed that night a poor man. He had not lost anything, but he was poor

because he was discontented, and discontented because he feared he was poor. He said, 'I want a mine of diamonds,' and he lay awake all night.

Early in the morning he sought out the priest. A priest may be very cross when awakened early in the morning, and when he shook that old priest out of his dreams, Ali Hafed said to him:

'Will you tell me where I can find diamonds?'

'Diamonds! What do you want with diamonds?'

'Why I wish to be immensely rich.'

'Well, then, go along and find them. That is all you have to do; go and find them, and then you have them.'

'But I don't know where to go.'

'Well, if you will find a river that runs through white sands between high mountains, in those white sands you will always find diamonds.'

'I don't believe there is any such river.'

'Oh yes, there are plenty of them; all you have to do is go and find them, and then you have them.'

Said Ali Hafed, 'I will go.'

So he sold his farm, collected his money, left his family in charge of a neighbor, and away he went in search of diamonds. He began his search at the Mountains of the Moon. Afterwards he came around into Palestine, then wandered on into Europe, and at last when his money was all spent and he was in rags, wretchedness, and poverty he stood on the shore of that bay at Barcelona in Spain, when a great tidal wave came rolling in between the pillars of Hercules, and the poor, afflicted, suffering, dying man could not resist the awful temptation to cast himself into that incoming tide, and he sank beneath its foaming crest, never to rise in this life again.

The man who purchased Ali Hafed's farm one day led his camel into the garden to drink, and as that camel put its nose into the shallow water of that garden brook, Ali Hafed's successor noticed a curious flash of light from the white sands of the stream. He pulled out a black stone having an eye of light reflecting all the hues of the rainbow. He took the pebble into the house and put it on the mantel which covered the central fires, and forgot all about it.

A few days later this same old priest came in to visit Ali Hafed's successor, and the moment he opened the drawing-room door he saw that flash of light on the mantel, and he rushed up to it, and shouted: 'Here is a diamond!' Has Ali Hafed returned?'

'Oh no, Ali Hafed has not returned, and that is not a diamond. That is nothing but a stone we found right out here in our own garden.'

'But, 'said the priest,' Itell you I know a diamond when I see it. I know positively that it is a diamond.'

Then together they rushed out into that old garden and stirred up the white sands with their fingers, and lo! there came up other more beautiful and valuable gems than the first. 'Thus,' said the guide, and it is historically true,' was discovered the diamond mine of Golconda, the most magnificent diamond mine in all the history of mankind, excelling the Kimberly itself. The Kohinoor and the Orloff of the crown jewels of England, the largest diamonds on earth came from that mine.

When that old Arab guide told me his story, he then took off his Turkish cap and swung it around in the air again to get my attention to the moral. As he swung his hat, he said to me, 'Had Ali Hafed remained at home and dug in his own cellar, or underneath his own wheat fields, or in his own garden, instead of wretchedness, starvation, and death by suicide in a strange land, he would have had 'acres of diamonds.' For every acre of that old farm, yes, every shovelful, afterward revealed gems which since have decorated the crowns of monarchs.'"

The Application.

Boys' and girls' 4-H club work offers youth the chance to find his "Acres of Diamonds" while he is yet young, and thus the greater and the longer may be his enjoyment in his accomplishment.

Through 4-H club work, farm boys and girls are finding "Acres of Diamonds." This exhibit, prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture, tells the stories of representative 4-H club members who have found their "Acres of Diamonds" on the farm or in the home.

(1) Sherman Ives of Connecticut was a member of the Goshen poultry club for several years. In order to earn his way through the State Agricultural college, he took his flock of poultry to college with him and cared for them there. Following graduation he returned to the home farm, went into partnership with his father and later bought the farm. He is now married, is making the farm pay and is a local club leader.

(2) Francis Smith of Oklahoma has been a 4-H club member for eight years, doing poultry, crops, canning, clothing, cooking and room improvement work. She has made 278 exhibits, given 35 public demonstrations, taken part in 22 judging contests, and culled over 2,000 chickens. First as secretary, then as president of her local club she helped organize other clubs in her township. Later she assisted the home demonstration agent in organizing clubs throughout the county. Won recognition at her county and State fairs; scholarships at the agricultural college, and in 1925 won the Moses Leadership Trophy open to 4-H club members throughout the United States.

(3) Don Shepard of Michigan is one of the Shorthorn breeders in his State. As a boy of 15 years of age he began his club work with two calves. During the years which followed his herd increased and improved to the extent that his exhibit winnings are now putting him through his State Agricultural College.

His County Shorthorn Breeders' Association elected him as secretary. He found his "Acres of Diamonds" on the home farm.

(4) Blanch Keller of Minnesota has been in club work since 1917. She won honors in bread club work both at home and in county, district, State and interstate fairs. Later, while teaching school she was local leader of a club and has since then been a local leader for three years. She has trained 10 demonstration teams and 205 individual demonstrators. Best of all, she "sold" the art of bread baking to her own neighborhood.

(5) Guy McReynolds of Nebraska has been in livestock club work since 1920. Beginning as a pig club member he has developed the farm herd of hogs and is now in partnership with his father. In 1924 he and other members of his club vaccinated over 1,000 hogs in his county. Now as a local club leader he is helping other farm boys find their "Acres of Diamonds" as he found his.

(6) Kenneth Hinshaw of Washington started his club work 10 years ago and has been a club member or local leader ever since. He brought some of the first purebred stock into his county. Ninety per cent of the purebred stock now in his county has been placed directly by club members. In 1924 he took the first carload of show stock ever sent out of his county on a show circuit of eight fairs. "Acres of Diamonds" are to be found on the farms in Klickitat County and Kenneth found one on his farm.

(7) The story of Mary Borreson of Nebraska tells us that "Acres of Diamonds" may be found in a professional way through 4-H club work. As a member of a 4-H club from 1914 to 1921 her achievements won recognition through public demonstrations. As a local leader she told the story of club work throughout her home county. Later she became assistant State club leader in her home State.

(8) Hilmer Carlson of Minnesota began in 1915 to make his club work fit into the work on his father's farm. The calf which he won through his club work was the first purebred animal on the farm. He now owns 16 pure bred animals and is in partnership with his father on "The Carlson Hersey Farm." Hilmer's father says "Club work did it." He found his "Acres of Diamonds" at home.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Extension Service
Office of Exhibits

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

A Summary of the Exhibit

ACRES OF DIAMONDS

An exhibit consisting of nine scenic booths showing the accomplishments of young people in 4-H Club Work.

Specifications

Total aisle frontage required-----104 ft.
Floor space required for feature-width---- 16 ft.
depth---- 14 ft.
Floor space required for each of 8
Boys' & Girls' Booths-----width---- 11 ft.
depth----- 7 ft.
Shipping weight for the nine exhibits-- 8755 lbs.
Electrical requirements--110 volt
A. C. current for two small motors
and 2,800 watts needed for lights.